

Michigan Regional Skills AlliancesSM



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Newsletter 1: Spring 2007

To Our Partners,

I would like to thank all of you for participating in the Michigan Regional Skills Alliances (MiRSAs) *initiative. It has been three years since Governor Granholm laid the groundwork for what has become a model program for regional cooperation throughout the country. We have seen the formation of 32 MiRSAs in our state with industries as varied as information security and forestry. We believe this initiative is making a difference by focusing limited resources where they are best used.

For program year 2007, to better serve existing and new MiRSAs, the MiRSA section will undertake several projects. All staff working with MiRSAs has been assigned an industry sector. They will develop technical knowledge about the industry and its workforce issues and serve as our in-house authority. Earlier this year, staff met with MiRSAs from the first round of funding that now, with three years experience, can help identify promising practices and areas where the state can be more supportive. This information will be taken into consideration when developing future events and technical assistance. Staff is working on the MiRSA web site and looking for ways to electronically link as many MiRSAs as possible. In June, there will be a learning institute devoted to Asset Mapping and a second session specifically concentrating on health care. Finally, the Bureau of Workforce Programs has been working with the Aspen Institute to offer their Business Value Assessment Tool. The tool will enable practitioners and their employer partners to assess the business value of their workforce services. It should be rolled out in mid 2007. Staff is prepared to support new and existing MiRSAs whenever and wherever possible.

Sincerely,

Brenda C. Njiwaji
Director, Bureau of Workforce Programs

Upcoming Events:

May:

- **28 - June 2:** Mackinaw Policy Conference 2007 – *Detroit Regional Manufacturing Skills Alliance*

June:

- **6:** Healthcare Learning Institute (Lansing M-TEC)
- **7:** Learning Institute on Asset Mapping (Lansing M-TEC)

July:

- **17 – 19:** WIRED Academy (Kansas City)

form a MiRSA in 2004. They probably would not have believed that within three years there *would be* a model. Research, in conjunction with information supplied through their Workforce Development Board, identified healthcare as the top regional workforce priority; and potentially, the focus of their new venture. Staff called and met with healthcare administrators to explain the concept and explore forming a MiRSA. The response was overwhelmingly positive, and the groundwork for the MiRSA was laid. From the beginning, two principles were adhered to: the MiRSA would be private-sector driven, and Michigan Works!, as the convener, would be completely impartial. It was decided that both short and long-term solutions to training and staffing issues would be worked on simultaneously. In this way, partners would see the MiRSA make an almost immediate impact followed up with well-planned longer-term projects.

Featured MiRSA:

EAST CENTRAL HEALTHCARE

“As a healthcare provider in our region, I know that we work in a competitive market. However, all of us are equally concerned and committed to the development of a skilled labor market to ensure the delivery of high quality patient care. The ability to train future healthcare workers is an important regional strategy.” Lynn Bruchhof, Vice President, Mid Michigan Health.

As one of the original twelve Michigan Regional Skills Alliances (MiRSA), the Saginaw, Midland, Bay Michigan Works! Agency didn't have a model to follow when they applied for funding to

Come Back To Nursing

The first project tackled by the MiRSA was *Come Back to Nursing* - a \$70,000, four-week campaign that included television, direct mail, radio, and print ads directed at attracting registered nurses and licensed practical nurses, who had left nursing back to the field. The private sector contributed about 40% of the funding and the three member Michigan Works! Agencies made up the difference. Over 200 potential employees registered online for the one-day event with 13 MiRSA partners participating. Carol M. Stoll, Vice President, Patient Services, and Chief Nurse Officer for Covenant HealthCare in Saginaw commented, “The campaign focused on nurses returning to the workforce, but I also believe it added a

local awareness about healthcare careers that are in great demand.” As a result of the campaign, Saginaw Midland Bay Michigan Works! reported a significant increase in demand for tuition assistance for training in healthcare fields.

Clinical Calendar

Another critical area identified during MiRSA strategic planning sessions was the shortage of graduating nurses. A sufficient number of high school students identified healthcare as their career goal, but too few were enrolling in or finishing training. Nurse training completion at some institutions was inhibited by a shortage of hospital and other clinical training sites. Other institutions had sufficient clinical sites but lacked the capacity to train all of the qualified students. The MiRSA conducted a national search to identify solutions to the clinical placement bottleneck. They learned that automating the clinical placement process and calendar produced a 10 to 20 percent increase in the number of clinical training openings in other areas of the country. Based on this information, the clinical calendar placement project was launched. The automated system now serves hospitals and long-term care facilities with increased efficiency, and better utilization of resources. “The clinical calendar project has decreased the time I spend on scheduling students by half. It truly made this part of my job much more efficient,” noted M. Gay Showalter, of Bay Regional Medical Center. The multi-year project, funded through MiRSA resources, currently has 20 participating partners.

Career Ladder and Matrix

The process of promoting healthcare careers to attract young people into the field and retain current workers has continued. MiRSA partners have created 15 in-depth healthcare career ladders along with videos featuring star employees and supervisors. In addition, a 55-occupation career matrix has been created and 750 career-matrix CD-ROMs have been produced with copies delivered to 190 middle schools, secondary schools, and intermediate school districts.

“We see the East Central Healthcare RSA as a continuing project -- a work in progress,” said Ed Oberski, Saginaw Midland Bay Michigan Works!, consortium director. “It has been successful so far because we listened to the employers, and brought education partners together to join forces to solve workforce-related problems. Through this process, we have been able to complement rather than duplicate what was already being accomplished in our region. The RSA is a catalyst for positive change.”

What’s New With MiRSAs?



Detroit Regional Manufacturing Skills Alliance:

The Detroit Regional Manufacturing Skills Alliance held their kickoff meeting February 16, 2007, at Wayne County Community College, in Taylor, Michigan. This was the first official

meeting between employers, partners, and regional government since the area received their MiRSA designation in October. The MiRSA, that covers nine counties in Southeast Michigan and focuses on advanced manufacturing, is being convened by the Detroit Regional Chamber. The kickoff was a chance for chamber officials to present the goals and anticipated outcomes for the Alliance. Employers were given the opportunity to review and comment on the plan which includes; conducting a Skills Gap Analysis, creating a Resource Map, participating in a Skill Standards Assessment, promoting Science Technology Engineering and Math programs and developing an Image Campaign to dispel stereotypes and myths about the manufacturing industry. The Chamber is also part of the recently designated \$5 million Workforce Innovation and Regional Economic Development grant from the U.S. Department of Labor. The Initiative demonstrates how integrating regional economic and workforce development activities and programs, and developing human capital can transform regional economies.



21st Century Workforce Initiative

The 21st Century Workforce Initiative was created as a statewide regional planning network that would be used to develop and implement strategies to grow and expand Michigan's regional economies. The initiative was introduced by Governor Granholm during the State of the State address in 2005. The three main goals of the initiative are to prevent Michigan's manufacturing industries, and jobs from leaving the state

by adopting a layoff prevention strategy, to support community-lead efforts to address plant closings and lay-offs through the development of strategies that link workforce and economic development, and to create regional workforce development teams to implement these strategies. Thirteen regions, encompassing every county, have been formed. The regional strategies will be very beneficial in helping to create the 21st Century Workforce. The Department of Labor and Economic Growth, Bureau of Workforce Programs is working with several highly regarded entities to provide the technical assistance needed to keep the regions thriving.

About the Newsletter

This is our first attempt composing a newsletter for the MiRSA Initiative. It is our hope to send out a minimum of two issues per year. We would like to make each issue as informative as possible and include as much information as we can on the successes and best practices of MiRSAs. We would appreciate your input on events that may be beneficial state wide, practices that may be useful to other MiRSAs, or any success that is particularly extraordinary.

For additional information about the Michigan Regional Skills Alliances or any upcoming events, please contact:

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